

Portraiture 3: Working with A model

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Course Outline

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| Module 1. | Introduction to Portraiture |
| Module 2. | Light for portraits |
| Module 3. | Working with a Model |
| Module 4. | About Models |
| Module 5. | Camera and Lighting
-- equipment and techniques |
| Module 6. | Post-Processing for portraiture |

MODULE 3. Working with a model

Purpose:

Understand the difference of portraiture for male, female, children, groups, and animal subjects

Outcome/Homework:

Take some portraits. Submit **one or two** images (Your Name_Module 3_Image title.jpg) together with brief reflective comments on the posing and anything else you want to share, eg what you want the image to convey, what you like about it, what you think could be improved, any images you used for inspiration etc etc. Note whether you are happy to share the images for discussion in the group or if you only want direct feedback from us. Email to geoff@geoffshaw.com with subject line Portraiture - Module 3.

Notes:

The approach to portraiture for different sexes, ages, individuals and or groups can vary enormously. This unit will focus on basic poses for males, females, children, groups and animals.

Portraits fall into five broad categories:

- head/face
- head and shoulders
- half body
- three-quarter body
- full length

Bite Size Tips – Capturing Classic Portraiture Compositions

<https://www.lightstalking.com/classic-portraiture-compositions/>

A Practical Photography Guide To Portrait Lengths

<https://www.ephotozine.com/article/a-practical-photography-guide-to-portrait-lengths-29169>

Note in some of the portrait examples in these notes and the zoom powerpoint, and in the online examples in the links, the use of props in some. Props can be used to add a point of focus, to provide something relating to the narrative of the image, to give the hands something to do, or to balance the composition. Props may be as simple as a hat, or a cup of tea.



The head

In art and photography the head has five common positions – face forward, a three-quarter turn to the left or right, and profile left or right.



Visit some of these links to broaden your ideas on head photographs

- 4 Headshot Photography Tips with Peter Hurley | 4 Quick Tips
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=qjyw7HTneuY>
- How to Pose a Model for Headshots: A Five-Minute Portrait Tutorial
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=uf71jvosUrY>

Visit some of these links to broaden your ideas of head and shoulders poses

- Head and shoulder crops
<https://portraits.julianance.com.au/headshot-crop-ratios/>
- The Portrait Photographer
<http://portrait-photographer.blogspot.com/2009/12/posing-head-and-face.html>

Visit some of these links to broaden your ideas of half body poses

- View this collection of half-body photraits for some ideas
<https://www.alamy.com/stock-photo/half-body-portrait.html>

Visit some of these links to broaden your ideas of three-quarter body poses

- A few ideas for poses
<https://www.michaelcarr.photography/34-length-poses/>

Visit some of these links to broaden your ideas of full-length poses

- How to Shoot Full Body Portraits
<https://www.photoworkout.com/make-full-body-portraits/>
- Full Length Portraits Do's and Don'ts
<https://www.ldavidlikesphotography.com/blog/full-length-portraits-how-do>

Visit Peter Hurley series – great hints for portrait photography

<https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCsG5ZXkZpWhaa71Xi2zC2HQ>

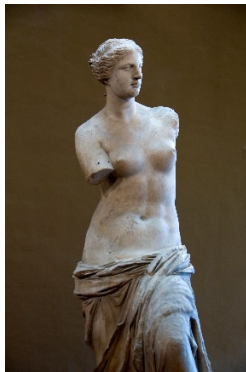
Working with females

Lighting

In general lighting for females is a softer light that will accentuate and compliment the skin tones and sculpture of the model/subject. Lighting for females is covered in Unit 5.

Poses

In general, the female subject will appreciate a complimentary pose that accentuates their femininity.



*Venus de Milo
Photo : Michael
Espinola Jr.*

Female, in general, will usually arrive at a photoshoot with pre-conceived ideas of the poses.

Female poses that compliment the model can be achieved by:

- one shoulder turned to the front, and one shoulder raised higher than the other.
- stand on one hip to achieve an 'S curve', achieving a feminine pose as seen in the classic 'Venus de Milo'.
- the face tilted towards the higher shoulder
- ensure hands are side on and not flat on to the camera.
- Be aware of less flattering facial characteristics and pose your subject carefully. e.g. blemishes are in shadow or a long or large nose photographed from a higher position

Avoid photographing a female model 'face on' as strong shoulders suggests masculinity. (Refer to 'Working with males' in the next section)

Every model is different, so, following your initial discussion, it is worthwhile testing out a range of poses with the model prior to the shoot. This, not only assists in deciding the preferred poses, but also assists in relaxing the model for the final shoot. Ensure that you check and are aware of all positions of body parts for each photograph. Check small things like hand position, (the flat of the hand on a dress is not as complimentary as the hands turned and draped in a feminine manner.)



Working with males

Poses

In general the male pose gives the impression of strength and power. Male portraits tend to be photographed with their face to the camera. Also popular is the popular 'natural' or 'cool' pose that also exude manliness but are more relaxed poses.



The Roaring Lion
by Yousuf Karsh
Wikimedia

Unlike females, male subjects have less experience and pre-conceived ideas about the kind of portrait they would prefer. Therefore the photographer needs to engage the male in conversation about what they expect the end product will look like.

The photographer needs to establish a clear understanding of the purpose of the photograph and what kind of 'look' the male is seeking to achieve. As per females, it is important to discuss clothing and props. e.g. bright colours, letters on sweaters and stripes can be distracting.

A general guide for posing a male:

- Feet; one foot towards camera and take the weight onto the back foot
- Turn the body to the appropriate pose (Men's poses are generally from a curve like a C)
- Adjust the head last. (Unlike women, men's heads are better positioned with the head tilted to the lower shoulder.)
- As per the female, take care where hands are placed.



Lighting

There are further notes for lighting covered in Module 5 as well as those from Module 2.

Posing Guide: 21 Sample Poses to Get You Started with Photographing Men

<https://digital-photography-school.com/21-sample-poses-to-get-you-started-with-photographing-men/>

21 Poses to Try When Photographing Men

<https://iso.500px.com/sample-male-poses/>

Couples

Poses

There are a range of reasons that two people have their photo taken. Portraits of couples fall into four main categories, older couples, partners, children

Generally the couple will be keen to display their affection for each other.

Older couples

Ask them to stand close together and form a V shape with the touching shoulders angled back and the outer shoulders closer to the camera. Dependent on the couple and how they want to display their affection for each other, arms can be placed around each other's waists or the male with one arm around the female's shoulder, bringing them together in an embrace. Their clothing should be complimentary. Discuss clothing prior as people tend to don their Sunday best, and forget that they should be wearing clothes that do not distract but blend in with each other harmoniously.

There is also another pose that can be used for couples. The male can stand with one shoulder closer to the camera (45 degree angle) and the female rests her back on his chest, retaining the same angle as the male. The male can then place his hands on her shoulders or upper arms as a gesture of togetherness and closeness.



This Photographer Has Elderly Couples Pose for Engagement-style Photos

<https://photographylife.com/portrait-photography-settings>

Younger couples

Partners, especially younger couples are generally keen to display the romantic link between them. The couple can stand close together chest to chest and face the camera. Cheeks may touch. The female may also place her forward hand on the male's shoulder (especially if there is an engagement ring to display!).

For another alternative, the male can stand with one shoulder closer to the camera (45 degree angle) and the female leans into him turning her head up towards him. This pose can be use for the couple to look into each other's eyes or to share a kiss.



Teens

Given the popularity of telephone photography, it is less likely to receive a portraiture request for teens. Most teens have a very clear idea of their 'image' and their 'look'.

Many will know which poses and head angles are the most flattering. Others will be extremely camera shy. It is a good idea to keep them moving and talking to keep talking to them as you shoot. Keep your camera speed up high!

Also refer to male, female and younger couples sections.

Six tips for photographing older children and teenagers

<https://www.kw-photography.co.uk/photographing-older-children-teenagers/>

7 Tips for Photographing Teenagers

<https://www.digital-photo-secrets.com/tip/2670/7-tips-for-photographing-teenagers/>

How to Photograph (Moody) Teenagers

<https://www.digital-photo-secrets.com/tip/5497/photograph-moody-teenagers/>



Children



Young children are perhaps the most challenging subjects. This is one photoshoot that needs to be well orchestrated.

Ensure that you talk with the parents prior and establish clearly what they would like you to achieve from the shoot. If they are not sure, suggest a locale that suits you and outline what you are considering.

Parks and playgrounds are usually good options, although you need to avoid busy or peak times in these public spaces.



- Plan ahead and visit the locale prior to the shoot
- Confirm the time, weather, facilities
- Locate good backgrounds
- Check the sun and light direction
- Check facilities, toilets, café etc.
- Work quickly
- Equip yourself with some distracting toys for use if things don't go too well. (Bubbles work well. Ask the parents to blow them and you take the photos!)

Birthday parties and family events are very challenging, and perhaps not the best choice for the inexperienced event photographer. Some advice: Set some parameters with the parents. e.g. If the child is tired or unwell, defer the shoot.

The 3 Types of Portrait Shots You Should Be Taking

<https://www.audreyannphoto.com/blog/2015/4/12/the-3-types-of-portrait-shots>

Babies

Photographing babies is generally quite a photographic challenge, particularly when you are dealing with newborns. It is always wise to phone ahead, to fit the shoot in between feeding times (unless requested of course). Discuss with parents and establish what kind of images they would like. It is an idea collect a number of different images you shoot prior to the shoot, so you can arrive ready and with props.



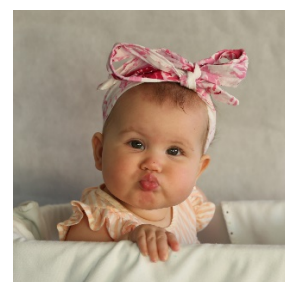
General rule of thumb rules are:

Don't use a flash, use natural/window light

- Stoop and try a low angle
- Be aware of room temperature



Wait for the decisive moment



Groups

Group photographs can be made more interesting than just taking a photo of people standing in a line. Considering the mood of the gathering, wedding, party, funeral etc.

- Make sure that the whole group is placed in the same light
- Groups photographs tend to look better if they are in a triangular or diamond shape
- Move participants so that their stature and their clothing balances the composition
- Make sure that you can see every person's face
- Develop some visual and audio cues that people can see/hear you
- Clearly explain what you expect them to be doing when you take the shot (smile etc)
- Develop a visual sign that enable them to know when you are going to take the shot



Animals



Animal portraits can be quite challenging. Unlike humans where you can talk them through a pose, animals need contact, coaching and a calm (and very patient) photographer. Animal portraits are best shot in diffused light.



Geoff Shaw – Contemplation



Joe Battista – MEG



Trace O'Rourke -
Portrait of a Japanese
Macaque

Homework

Due Tuesday 23 March

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